Minutes of the Meeting December 4th, 1997

Projects Reviewed

West Lake Union Corridor Improvement Project Intiman Playhouse WSCTC Expansion (Action Review) Horse Patrol Facility KOMO Alley Vacation

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Convened: 8:00 am

Commissioners Present

Barbara Swift, Chair Moe Batra Gail Dubrow Robert Foley Gerald Hansmire Jon Layzer Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Marcia Wagoner Peter Aylsworth Rebecca Walls 120497.1 Project: West Lake Union Corridor Improvement Project

Phase: Update

Presenters: Rich Smith, Seattle Public Utilities

John Arnesen, Seattle Transportation

West Lake Union Corridor Design Oversight Committee

Attendees: Teri Aldrich, Seattle Bike Advisory Board

Marty Alexander, Design Oversight Committee Jerry Arbes, Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Bill Blair, Queen Anne Community Council Molly Cadranell, Lake Union Association

Donald John Coney

Barbara Crelp, Cascade Bicycle Club Shane Dewald, Seattle Transportation Suzanne Dills, Commercial Marine Margie Freeman, Freeman & Gibson Linda Hammons, Parks Department Llew V. Hansen, Seattle Public Utilities

Bill Jack, Seattle Transportation Russell Keeper, R.K. Investments Pete Lagerway, Seattle Transportation

Louise McGrody, Northwest Bicycle Federation

Elizabeth Monrean, R.K. Investments Patrick Murphy, Seattle Public Utilities

Michael Read, Department of Construction and Land Use

Charles Smith, SBAB

Susie Stephens, Northwest Bicycle Federation Andy Wichert, Design Oversight Committee Gerry Wilhelm, Seattle Transportation

Time: 2 hr. (0.3%)

The Design Oversight Committee was formed as a continuation of the public involvement process created from the West Lake Union Neighborhood Workshop. Participation will involve monthly two hour meetings for approximately one year. Eleven individuals were selected to represent the following stakeholder interests:

- area property owners and users business and residential;
- adjacent business and community representatives;
- representatives from non-motorized user groups.

Four of the Oversight Committee members will be continuing in a capacity similar to their involvement with the Workshop Planning Committee. This is intended to establish a degree of continuity from the public involvement included in the Corridor Improvement Projects' workshop process through the public process incorporated into the design and implementation phases.

The Committee's primary role is:

- to advise the Seattle Public Utilities and Transportation Departments' project management and design team as they develop and progress with the project's design;
- to serve as "conduits of information" between the design team and interested citizens by updating individuals and groups on the project's status and providing input back to the Oversight Committee;

- to work within a diverse group of individuals and respect other ideas in order to achieve consensus;
- to participate in public meetings at key points during the design process.

This update discussion with the Design Commission was scheduled in response to Committee member complaints about the process and project development.

Discussion:

Smith:

I would like to summarize the public process to date. In 1996 we broke the mold in a joint sponsored workshop. It was a good opportunity for involving the Design Commission and other groups. At this workshop were approximately 110 citizens. After the report from this workshop was produced we made a seamless transition to the Oversight Committee of eleven persons. The Planning Commission then briefed the City Council and there was a consensus to begin the design process with monthly committee meetings. A Mission Statement was developed and included in the report. In the design phase we tried to put the workshop principles and guidelines onto the site. The first layout was completed in June of 1997.

Hansen:

After meeting with property owners along the proposed site, we found that the following changes were important: separate truck access, loading issues, and saving the existing landscape. We eliminated eleven driveways, some were reopened, and made other changes to accommodate owners. We could not make all of the desired changes. We also tried to maintain privacy around residential areas.

Dewald:

In terms of the landscape improvements, we tried to recognize the many different interests. Space is the deciding factor in deciding where to landscape. The typical City criteria for parking lot improvements, as developers are required to provide, is not feasible in this project. There isn't enough space. We looked for the best use of the space available and decided that street trees would be the best landscape solution. They provide the most visual improvement for the least amount of ground space. Given that decision, we are trying to cluster trees adjacent to building frontages. We are adding accent treatments to access locations for increased visibility. The narrow strips of landscaping are difficult to deal with. We are thinking about using pavers or groundcovers, and varying them along the path. We are also trying to provide seating near the boat lift in response to citizen input. It would be an informal kind of seating, flat-top boulders that blend with the waterfront.

Murphy:

The drainage design phase of this project began as a separate project, separately funded. It was combined with the capitol improvement project to maximize efficiency in a coordinated effort. The current drainage in this area is approximately 100 years old with the last improvements occurring in 1914 and 1924. There are 15 to 20 separate outfalls from the drainage system into Lake Union. We propose a new mainline that would intercept the existing outfalls on the East side of the street and combine them into four new outfalls. We will regrade the gravel areas and extend some paving. We will include stormwater treatments prior to the Lake Union sediment separation of pollutants.

Dubrow:

What are the remaining issues of controversy and disagreement? I perceive there is some controversy over the Mission Statement and how aspects of the principles have been translated into the design.

Smith:

The two major issues are bicycle uses and parking. The bicycle issue seemed to be getting resolved. It was agreed that this new path would be for slow users only, and not for commuter bicycle traffic. The parking issue is primarily one of space. For the

1.5 mile length of this project, 80 percent has no sidewalk. Putting in the pathway, therefore, means an automatic loss of spaces, even with small amounts of landscaping. We are trying to find creative ways of dealing with the problem.

Dubrow: Is there disagreement over those issues, or over the process?

Smith: Given the many interests in this project, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise. The process is there to deal with these problems. The Oversight Committee is the established forum for discussing these issues. It was our view that we were working through the issues with this process.

Dubrow: There seems to be a lack of clarity about what constitutes the process.

Foley: Does the communication with the Oversight Committee seem to be functioning?

Smith: I feel it has worked well.

Layzer: Given the parking problem, what are the strategies to manage it; such as limited time parking to mitigate the loss of spaces?

Smith: Parking is the first issue with most of the property owners. We have had an increased number of meetings with property owners about their parking options.

Wichert: I represent those that asked for this meeting with the Commission. This meeting was an attempt at course correction for this project. Some stakeholders feel a loss of effectiveness and fear a loss of original design concepts. There is a lack of effectiveness and input in the City hearings. They are too short, and too few for meaningful input and discussion. I realize that it's a first draft, but we have yet to spend any time commenting on the plan. We need time to really analyze the design plans. The parking layout is also of great concern. I am also unsure about the legal issues such as liability, permits, future restrictions for parking loss. There has been a lack of information about ADA requirements, minimum and maximum stall sizes, etc. I am also asking the Design Commission to improve the structure of the process. We need longer, more frequent meetings, a better forum for seeing the plans, an information liaison from the City to deal with the committee, and the renewed presence of the Design Commission in the process. This project has drawn the corridor into a neighborhood. The old railroad was the thread that connected the neighborhood, now the new path can continue that.

Freeman: There is an opportunity for property owners to add asphalt where gravel is now. While the City has asphalt trucks on site, perhaps property owners could pay for extended paying.

Alexander: One problem is that the City says they have presented five or six different options to property owners, but the Oversight Committee doesn't get to see these options. We don't know if comments and suggestions are going anywhere. We need to know how the suggestions are being incorporated in the redesign.

Blair: I have been following this project for fifteen years. I am interested in traffic safety, lakeshore access, and multi-use pathways. It is critical that the project keep moving forward. I was surprised to hear that the meetings had been canceled.

I took the drawing that the City presented, had an engineer in our office work with it, and moved the path to the street edge. This allowed for 145 to 150 stalls of parking. It seems silly to take parking away and then add more people to the area. This option seems feasible.

Dubrow: In this option, your principle objective is to keep parking?

Monrean: Yes, but we also want a continuous path.

Monrean:

Arbes:

I thought that the process was working. I was surprised to get the letter of complaint sent to the City. We need to be discussing design potentials and options at our

meetings. Issues are brought up at the meetings, but there is insufficient time to discuss them.

It is the citizen's interest to have another Burke-Gilman trail. A path that Aldrich:

accommodates slow bicycle traffic is adequate. I like the current design and think it

adequately addresses the issues.

Swift: I received a letter from David Grein and would like to mention his comments. It is worthwhile to pull back now and look at the direction of the process. The effort should continue and Seattle Transportation should come out looking better in the end. The Oversight Committee needs to figure out how to structure itself. I don't recommend outside or Design Commission involvement, and think that the process

would be more successful if problems were worked out between the parties involved.

Dills: I helped present the workshop results to the City Council. I question where the workshop results are integrated in these designs. It seems that the committee comments don't get regarded. We have invested a lot of time in this project and I would hate to see it all become wasted. I would like the committee to regroup and move forward, recognizing that everyone won't agree on everything. This can be a win/win project for everyone.

This discussion has been a remarkably thorough presentation of information with Swift: candid and generous comments and recommendations for solutions. It really shows the human capacity to solve problems. To really understand the project we need the minutia to define solutions. The project is large enough that confusion is inevitable. The Commission would like a more in depth presentation, including details, soon.

Then we can go through the program and combine the concepts with the outcome.

I think what we are talking about here is the difference between planning in public and designing in public. What worked is planning in public; getting information about users needs, and property owners input. The difficult part is designing public. The City is used to going into a box with the comments and designing in private. We are hearing that that way of designing is not enough, and that the Oversight Committee wants more actual involvement in the design process. If this is true, how could they be involved, and what kind of process would result? Designing in public also requires informing the public about design information, such as code requirements, etc. An information liaison would probably serve the City well by providing the public with design information. This will probably result in a more engaged and effective design

Folev: Overall, I think that it is an excellent process that needs to be reformed a little. I am concerned about the level of disagreement within the Oversight Committee. The discussions need compromise and consensus, not majority rule. The Oversight Committee needs to get together, agree on a process for how the project should continue, and present that to the City. The method of responding to written committee comments could include a formal response to a list of comments by the Committee that can be responded to and checked off.

I also expected a meeting full of contention, and appreciate the level of dignity today. I understand Seattle Transportation's reluctance to present designs. Pictures polarize people. They either love it or hate it. This makes for difficult change. I think that public design needs to be pursued. The City seems open to more public design. I suggest a regrouping meeting where the current design is presented with the understanding that it is in flux and a process for changes will occur. Then a section by section analysis could be done. This type of review could be useful to all involved.

process.

Lavzer:

Swift:

Designing in public requires a structured approach. There should first be a body of information, a detailed outline with a range of flexibility in application. The functions for varying areas should be laid out so you can look at ways to solve area issues. It has been my experience that reasonable people can recognize that compromise is for the common good. It is also the role of the Oversight Committee to protect the common good of the neighborhood. The committee needs greater organization, autonomy, and a detailed schedule. The committee should tell the City what it thinks it needs and when.

Hansmire:

I have a similar take on the situation. Space is the key issue. The September schedule will be hard to meet given the amount of property owners and citizens involved. The project has many clients and all are interested. I would expect an impass at this stage given the complicated issues in this project. The property owner comments should be brought back to the public through the committee, not internalized in the City design process. Some problems won't be solved, and choices should be created. People can then give up something in exchange for something else. This will result in a better compromise.

Swift. There is also the issue of strict code application. The Design Commission could support more flexibility in the code requirements for space and landscaping.

We are already looking at how to meet the intent of the code rather than the actual Dewald: requirements.

The City has to be flexible. The bike advocates also need to be flexible in limiting the **Dubrow**: thoroughfare to slow use traffic. The businesses need to be flexible about less parking and added amenities that will result in a neighborhood. I hope for a backing off of solutions and a more concerted effort to reach compromises.

Hansmire: It is a unique neighborhood. The solution should be kept simple and related to the

Batra: Citizens should also be aware of the costs involved in a drawn out process and really try to expedite it where possible. I also suggest more frequent and longer design

Smith: We will consider the suggestions today and will work with the Oversight Committee on the process. The planning phase is easy, with scattered input and little confrontation. The design phase gets difficult when formal decisions have to be made and desires can't be realized. We hope that people will feel a part of the decision making process and realize that not all desires can be accommodated. We hope to have good communication with the Oversight Committee and other groups so that we can move ahead with this project.

The City tends to make the decisions inside and then present it to the public. In this **Dubrow**: process the decisions need to be made outside with the Oversight Committee. The best consensus should be made with both groups and there should be discussions about mitigating the desires not included.

Swift: The Commission comments have identified tools to solve problems. I charge the Oversight Committee to take its role in hand, to define itself, and to be proactive and reactive in working with the City. I sense that you have what is needed to work through these issues and don't need the Design Commission in a greater capacity than it already serves.

ACTION: This was a discussion session requiring no formal action. The Commission greatly appreciates the thorough and dignified manner in which the discussion

took place. The Commission recommends that the Oversight Committee hold a meeting to agree on its role in this project and the process in which it continues, realizing that compromise from all parties is a necessity. The Commission also recommends that the City develop a formal way of responding to the Committee comments while making a concerted effort to conduct the design process in the public arena of the Oversight Committee meetings.

120497.2 Project: Intiman Playhouse

Phase: Schematics

Presenters: Dave Buchan, Seattle Center

Robert Schneider, Bumgardner Architects Tom Berger, The Berger Partnership Paul Kostenic, Intiman Theater

Time: 1.5 hr. (hourly)

The Intiman Playhouse facility sits in the northwest quadrant of the Seattle Center campus, facing Mercer Street. The Bageley Wright Theater lies to the west and the exhibition hall to the east. The Kobe Bell sits just east of the new rehearsal hall. Currently the Intiman Theater must rely on outside services and facilities for scenery production and rehearsal spaces. These functions will be housed in the new rehearsal hall south of the existing theater. The expansion will also provide a more formal backdrop for the Kobe Bell and will create a space for a changing sculptural display south of the new rehearsal hall.

Discussion:

Batra: Can the art podium at the south side of the building be accessed from all sides? **Berger**: Yes. The location and configuration is not now fixed, but we do want to allow 360

degree access to the artwork.

Dubrow: I'm not sure I understand the need for the rehearsal hall being a dark box.

Kostenic: I is primarily out of respect for the actors. It is difficult to rehearse when lots of people

are watching. It also enhances public anticipation of a show. The new rehearsal hall

needs to have complete black capability.

Dubrow: Given that need, I understand the principle of the building being a backdrop for

outside areas.

Layzer: Could you review the loading area layout. How will they deal with dumpsters?

Turnbull: A team for the Seattle Center has been working on solving the dumpster blight

problem. They have concluded that the Intiman Theater would have their own

dumpster in the loading area.

Schneider: In the future, when the budget allows, a gate will enclose the loading entrance. there is

also an art opportunity on the concealing wall at the north end of the loading dock.

Layzer: Is the elevator shown allowing access into and out of the Intiman Theater? Can it be

used for access through the corridor?

Schneider: Yes. It can be used to access the Theater and it connects the two levels in the corridor

for through handicapped access.

Hansmire; It is nice to see it as a backdrop building.

Schneider: We wanted to simplify it as much as possible.

Foley: This design is a clear response to the context. I like the level of communication

between the design teams.

Action: The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation. The Commission

recommends approval of the project as presented in schematic design.

120497.3 Project: Commission Business

Action Items

A. MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20TH, 1997: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items

B. MUNICIPAL CAMPUS: Wagoner reported.

C. RTA: Wagoner reported. The Design Commission should define its role in this project.

D. SDC TRANSITION PAPER: Staff reported.

120497.4 Project: Municipal Center Round Table Brown Bag Lunch

The Deign Commission attended this meeting to discuss the location of Mayor and Council chambers.

120497.5 Project: WSCTC Expansion

Phase: Action Review

Time: 1 hr.

The Design Commission reviewed the action developed in the December 1st meeting regarding the WSCTC Expansion project. The results of this discussion and the formal action are written in the December 4th letter to Honorable Jan Drago, Honorable Richard McIver, and Seattle City Council.

120497.6 Project: Horse Patrol Facility

Phase: Schematics

Presenters: Monica Lake, Executive Services Department

Johanna Schorr, The Portico Group Dennis Meyer, The Portico Group

Sue Partridge, Executive Services Department Officer David Drain, Seattle Police Department

Time: 1. hr. (.3%)

The current horse patrol facilities are temporarily located at Discovery Park. This use is contradictory with Discovery Park goals of being a natural habitat. The new facility will be located at West Crest Park. It is in the Seattle city limits and is currently owned by the City. The property will change departments through a land transfer between departments. The total project budget is \$750,000, \$550,000 to \$575,000 of which is for construction costs.

The facility is located along the top of a ridge site to avoid major slope issues. Southern exposure is important for drying out the paddock after a rain. Protecting the horses from vandals and late-night park users is also important. The facility program includes office space, a stable, a large paddock or pasture, a future indoor arena, and trailer parking access. The office building will be a double wide mobile unit containing the sergeant's office, a meeting room/kitchen, laboratories, nine male lockers and six female lockers. The barn structure houses 12 horses, two wash stalls that could be converted into horse stalls, areas for hay, chips, storage/tack, and eight exterior wash stalls. The roof and walls will be metal clad.

Discussion:

Batra: Is there a place for children to visit and interact with the horses?

Drain: We commonly have about one tour per week with 30 to 40 kids. We can bring out a

horse or two beside the stables in the exterior grooming area for petting and

interacting with the kids.

Dubrow: Are there competing park uses for this space?

Lake: No. It is currently owned by the Executive Services Department. Lewd activity

frequently takes place in the area, so a police presence would be of some benefit.

Dubrow: Who is being displaced, good or bad?

Drain: We currently patrol the forest around the proposed facility. There is some questionable

activity in the area, usually no less than twenty persons.

Dubrow: Have there been any discussions with the gay groups in the area? There is a good

public process to cover that issue.

Lake: We will recommend that to the Parks Department.

Partridge: The public process is part of the land transfer.

Foley: Have you explored storm water management? What are the issues involved with

horses on the property?

Meyer: There are grade, paddock accessibility, and rainwater drainage issues to consider. The

site primarily drains to the south where collection points at the south edge will lead to

a sanitary sewer.

Dubrow: Is there a public art requirement?

Lake: There is no requirement.

Partridge: Money is pooled with other projects, there is no art on site. **Dubrow**: I think there is a public love and appreciation for this project.

Wagoner: Is there an adequate drainage budget for the project.

Lake: Yes. 75 percent of the budget is for drainage and site work. **Foley**: Does the program include room for potential expansion?

Drain: That is difficult to answer. The program goes in cycles. The horse patrol fits nicely

into community plans. There could be some expansion of the patrol.

Lake: There is some room in the barn for expansion of the patrol.

Dubrow: It seems that the barn turns its back on the surrounding forest. Are there ways to

increase the eyes on the park from the barn?

Foley: Is there potential for taking the horses into the park forest?

Drain: That will happen as one phase of training. The patrol unit was specifically designed to

patrol parks.

Swift: The double wide mobile unit makes me sad. Despite the exterior treatments, it is still a

double wide. Is there an alternative, perhaps portable farm-type buildings are

available. The first thing that a visitor experiences is the double wide office. It would

be nice if it had more of a farm feel like the barn.

Foley: It seems like a good, sensible solution.

Action: The Commission recommends approval of the schematic design as presented. The

Commission also recommends that alternative building types for the office be

explored and future patrol unit expansion be considered.

120497.7 Project: **KOMO Alley Vacation**

Phase: Design Development

Presenters: David Grein, Fisher Properties

Beverly Barnett, Seattle Transportation Tom Berger, The Berger Partnership

Michael Galbraith, Lance Mueller & Associates

Time: 1. hr. (hourly) subcommittee

The plaza of the KOMO block has always been intended to be used by both vehicles and pedestrians. Vehicular use would be limited to special KOMO broadcasting events, tenants moving in or out, and emergency vehicles. The Department of Construction and Land Use is concerned about putting curb cuts at the street and the possibility of unapproved vehicular access to the plaza. The design team would like to keep the curb cuts and add removable bollards at the cut location to limit vehicular access.

Discussion:

Dubrow: How often will cars be using the plaza and where would they park?

Berger: It is an invitational space. Bollards create a vehicular barrier while allowing adequate

pedestrian access. I recommend that the cuts be left in place and that bollards are

added in the future as necessary.

Swift: Where will the bollards be placed?

Berger: They will be in line with the wall nearest the cuts.

Dubrow: I still need to be convinced that vehicles need to be in that space.

Grein: We need to bring in a food bank truck for special KOMO events. Broadcast trucks are

also needed as educational tools for special events. When tenants move in and out their primary entrances are in the plaza and loading the moving trucks would be most efficient there. There is also the need for emergency vehicle access.

Berger: Given the broadcast functions of KOMO, having equipment visible helps explain what the building is about.

Wagoner: Does truck access require curb cuts? Can't most trucks go over curbs?

Galbraith: The curb cuts will be de-emphasized by continuing the plaza paving pattern, making them difficult to see.

Foley: Is it functional to eliminate cuts altogether?

Grein: Curb cuts are not needed for emergency vehicles, but make access for moving trucks and broadcast trucks easier with less bouncing.

Wagoner: I am concerned about it becoming similar to Westlake plaza where vehicular use can be a problem.

Berger: Those issues could be addressed with bollards. We are trying to keep the curb cuts inconspicuous, while still allowing controlled access. It could almost look like a remnant of the old alley which was a dead-end and not readily used by the public.

Grein: The secluded nature of the alley supported the approval of the alley vacation.

Dubrow: DCLU's concern is the public driving through the plaza. My concern is keeping the plaza from becoming a parking lot for trucks. Is there a set of controls to ensure that it doesn't become a private parking lot?

Grein: There is already a lot across the street to the south where the trucks are parked.

Batra: Are you objecting to the broadcast truck use?

Dubrow: I just want the public to understand that the plaza is a public place without a dead-end.

Berger: I think that KOMO would be aggressive about any abuse of the space.

Swift: What about locating the bollards at the curb edge? In that location they would block vehicular access without creating a pedestrian separation from the plaza.

Berger: That would really put pedestrians inside the whole space.

Grein: I like that idea. What if the plaza becomes a security problem? If night closure is needed, would there just be another series of gates at the building edge?

Dubrow: Plaza security is a project problem that needs to be dealt with now. The project is based on the idea of a public swath through the plaza.

Swift: There is really no way for this design to address that problem gracefully.

Dubrow: Security is a reasonable concern. It is a difficult space to police.

Berger: We could create adequate barriers if necessary. This building is intended to be in 24 hour use.

Galbraith: The plaza are is really no more vulnerable than the exterior of the project.

Dubrow: Has the project been reviewed by the Police Department?

Grein: We are having a critique by a security consultant next week.

Dubrow: I suggest that you involve the local police.

Grein: We plan to do that in a later meeting. Next week's meeting is more about building security.

Foley: I am concerned about the gated potential. At what times it would be closed off? At that time it seems that the plaza stops being a public space, which is the basis for the alley vacation.

Berger: Moving out the bollards seems to address that issue and invites the public into the plaza space. The security issues should be addressed on an as needed basis.

Swift: We are asked today to look the curb cut issue. I would like you to come back soon and put to rest the other issues concerning the vacation and public benefit.

Dubrow: I am nervous about committing to the bollards without committing to the total package. I wonder if the alley vacation could be changed to an alley realignment to

maintain public ownership.

Barnett: That is not really an option. The Council has already approved the alley vacation.

Swift: What were the conditions of that approval?

Barnett: The approval conditions were centered around insuring public accessibility. The Council supported the notion of limited vehicular access. They wanted the number of

vehicles, duration of plaza use, and at what hours it can be used to be specified.

Swift: The use of bollards does not attempt to deal with the defensibility of the space. I am also concerned that approval of this configuration precludes having a clear line of site

through the plaza.

Grein: We did our best to create a clear line of site through the plaza. The corner space is a

restaurant that will have primarily glazed facades. The Space Needle to the North also

guides people through the space

Dubrow: I am eager to see it become defensible space. I would like you to come back with

possible design modifications that help resolve that issue. The bollards at the curb are all right with me if there is a commitment to return with refinements on the other

issues discussed today.

Foley: I prefer bollards only at the curb cut rather than all along the curb line.

Barnett: Putting bollards in the sidewalk will also raise permit issues.

Action: The Commission recommends that the design team pursue the installation of

bollards at the curb cuts next to the curb. The Commission requests an additional presentation responding to the defensible space issues previously raised in March

of 1997.